

EncycloMedia Man *by Mike Overly*

Tonal Center Domino vs. Modal Domino

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As you have previously learned, the purpose of the **tonal center** is to suggest a **scale** to use while **improvising** over a particular **chord**. The **tonal center domino** contains a **letter**, a **scale type** and a **number**.

In bar 1 of the following example, the **C major scale** is the **first** tonal center and the **tonal center number** is **1**. Then, in bar 2 the tonal center **modulates** to a **D \flat major scale** and the tonal center **number** becomes **\flat 2**. The purpose of the tonal center **number** is to create a **relationship** between **modulated** tonal centers.

Musical notation for Tonal Center Domino. The notation is in bass clef with a tempo of quarter note = 72. It consists of two bars. The first bar is in 4/4 time and contains a C major 7 chord (C^{maj7}) with the function I^{maj7}. The second bar is in 4/4 time and contains an A \flat 7 chord (A \flat ⁷) with the function V⁷. Below the notation, the Tonal Center is defined for each bar: Bar 1: C major | 1; Bar 2: D \flat major | \flat 2.

The purpose of the **modal domino** is to suggest a **mode** to use while **improvising** over a particular **chord**. The modal domino is located under the tonal center domino. The modal domino contains a **mode name** and a **numeral**. The **name** of the mode is associated with a chord's **function**. The purpose of the **modal numeral** is to identify the **letter** of the mode.

Simply stated, **function** is the **location** of a chord within a scale and is symbolized by a **numeral**. For example, in **major scale** harmony, **ionian** is associated with a **major type** chord in one's place, **I**. **Mixolydian** is associated with a **dominant type** chord in five's place, **V**. A **serif numeral** represents **major type** harmony. See **Bass EncycloMedia** page 47 for more on this subject.

Musical notation for Modal Domino. The notation is in bass clef with a tempo of quarter note = 72. It consists of two bars. The first bar is in 4/4 time and contains a C major 7 chord (C^{maj7}) with the function I^{maj7}. The second bar is in 4/4 time and contains an A \flat 7 chord (A \flat ⁷) with the function V⁷. Below the notation, the Modal is defined for each bar: Bar 1: ionian | I; Bar 2: mixolydian | V⁷.

Now, here's the important take away...

Both the tonal center **number** and the modal **numeral** identify a **letter**. In other words, the tonal center **number** identifies the first **letter** of the **scale** while the modal **numeral** identifies the first **letter** of the **mode**.

Never underestimate the power of **numerics**!

'til next time, play and have fun... I'll be listening!

